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ABSTRACT

Livingston College of Rutgers University, N.J., has established an Urban Communications Teaching and Research Center. Using an interdisciplinary approach, it offers an innovative approach to the study of communications systems in urban society, consolidating course offerings, independent study, internships, community service and research. Its purposes are to examine the existing communications structure in urban areas, to search for alternative formats, to develop critical consumers of information, and to work on communications problems in the urban community. The development of the center, its current projects, and course offerings are described here. (JK)

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# URBAN COMMUNICATIONS AND THE UNIVERSITY

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URBAN COMMUNICATIONS AND THE UNIVERSITY

If we are really serious about our efforts to improve the urban condition in the United States, we must pay far more attention to the complicated system of formal and informal communications which profoundly affects not only the image and information-transfer capacity of urban society, but its very substance and ability to become better.

Our efforts in this field are too piece-meal, and our attention span erratic. We can cite some fine examples of individual research; occasional warnings by national presidential commissions, and random programs in or beyond the universities. But the goals are short-range and while helpful, will not do the job that is needed.

In looking for culprits, it is easy and correct to describe a general insensitivity and inability of the mass media to communicate our urban concerns with depth or substance. But we must also take a harder look at our educational institutions, for it is in the high schools, colleges and universities where the most serious indictment can be returned. I am not interested in blame, except as it relates to solutions, and this document will concentrate on the latter.

McLuhan criticizes the schools for failure to prepare students adequately to deal with communications problems -- to give them sufficient shelter against "media fallout". But this is just part of the problem.

Yes, it is important that we develop a general populace which acts as thoughtful and critical consumers of the media. But we need a far more activist approach. People must not only consume more carefully, but must be encouraged to communicate for themselves. This means providing the intellectual base, the practical skills, the hardware and the general environment in which to communicate. The schools and the universities are an especially fruitful place in which to try this.

At the same time we are engaged in program and curriculum development, we must expand field work, research and community service efforts in the university which analyze the interrelated systems of our urban condition, and gives us a better sense of how urban communications relates to this.

The program which I am directing at Livingston College, Rutgers the State University of New Jersey, is a major effort at the undergraduate and graduate levels, andin field work and community service, to create a whole new discipline of urban communications, and I wish to share the pain and pleasures of the experience since its beginnings in 1969.

We have integrated our curriculum and field work with such things as creation of a community-based communications center in conjunction with an anti-poverty program; a statewide environmental documentation program blending communicative skills and the disciplines of the fine arts, and the training of minority persons for mass media and communications positions relating to community development. These will be described in more detail.

First, let us strip away the veneer, and talk of urban comuunications in more precise and vivid terms.

Kerner told us about the growing inability to communicate across racial lines, and the two-society phenomenon that was, and still is, growing worse in the United States. The commission singled out municipal officials who cannot keep in touch with their constitutents. especially the poor and the minorities. It criticized the mass communicators for failing to communicate a true sense of our urban life. It even outlined action steps ranging from the picayune to the most elaborate, with universities urged to take a more significant role.

But all this did little good, and was hardly felt before it was forgotten, subsumed in a wave of other presidential reports. The blame is partly our inability as a nation to confront broader systemic concerns and translate them to the daily realities. Thus, the cliche of "city hall's failure to communicate" never gets quite translated into the thousands of problems residents of a city face daily in trying to communicate their need for services.

Or the opposite problem exists, where the daily realities are not translated into the general causes for the system's dysfunction. The daily problems, when communicated by the mass media or by public officials who are image-conditioned by the media, descend to the most embarassing levels of "human interest" stereotypes. We are all disheartened by the infant who dies of lead paint poisoning. But seldom do we probe deeply and long enough to learn why the paint was sold with an inadequate warning; why municipal and

state laws were not legislated, or if so, not communicated to the general public; why municipal officials from several agencies relating to health, code enforcement or housing did not communicate with each other, or why the general public suffered because of poor communications between municipal officials and the press.

When we do act, we are too prone to apply superficial cures. Tell a mayor he is not communicating properly with his constituents (in a non-election year) and he might install a second phone or publish a brochure filled with puffery. Or he might pluck away one of his 'savvy' staff members, usually a dedicated but inexperienced recent college graduate, and order a store-front opened, where a temporary exercise in liason and ombudsmanship get nowhere. Or we are overwhelmed by the 'coffee and cake' syndrome, where highly publicized and short-lived rap sessions between the mayor and 'just plain folks' does little more than heighten the frustrations of the unheard.

I wish to propose a different kind of marriage between the field of urban studies, community development and communications. It has already begun at Livingston College, and there is little reason why it could not be tried elsewhere. Many of our colleges and universities have the components; it is just a matter of soldering them together in an inter-related program. The blue-print for doing this will be presented in the following pages. It will be explored in several stages: a definition of urban communications and a staking out of parameters of concern; the setting and background for its development at Livingston, and finally, specific programs and curriculum development which grew out of this.

THE BEGINNINGS:

Livingston College is the third college in a five-unit federated master plan for the New Brunswick campus of Rutgers, now a state university, but with a history as a private university going back to 1766. The other two colleges are Rutgers Men's College and Douglass College for Women.

Livingston was fortunate in receiving ample open acreage in what was formerly Camp Kilmer, across the Raritan River from New Brunswick, for an entirely new campus which opened in 1969 as a co-ed, residential institution. Its full complement of 5,000 undergraduate and 1,000 graduate students will be reached in 1975. The college evolved during the troubled middle 1960's, and events such as the civil disturbances in the major cities, and the growing re-evaluation of higher education in meeting the needs of minority students were significant factors in the master plan.

It was decided that the college would not seek a token admission of minority students, but would consciously create a total environment for learning, field work and research that would underline minority concerns. Approximately a third of the student body today is Black and Puerto Rican, as is a third of the faculty and administration.

The curriculum of the college, while possessing a wide range of offerings familiar at any good liberal arts college, has a decided and continued commitment to disciplines relating to urban studies and community development. It was this atmosphere that presented the ideal atmosphere for the seed of an urban communications idea to grow.

The chance for survival of the program was further enhanced by assignment of the urban communication sequence to The Division of Urban Studies and Community Development. The latter consists of three units: The Department of Community Development; The Department of Geography; and The Department of Planning and Policy Development. Assisted by a Carnegie Corporation grant the division developed an interdisciplinary approach to urban studies and community development, with approximately 32 full and part time faculty brought together in the division from a wide variety of disciplines.

The urban communications program is based in the undergraduate Department of Community Development, and offers work in the graduate Department of Planning and Policy Development. The latter has approximately 200 students at the master's and doctoral level, and the former has approximately 200 majors and services about 700 students per semester enrolled in courses.

The division has taken a systems approach with health, housing, education, transportation, planning, policy development, community development and communications being the immediate areas of concern. The faculty consists of members fitting the traditional description of university academicians, with impressive research publications and doctoral work in the field. Also recruited were faculty like myself who possessed academic credentials, but who had been outside the university working actively in some area of planning, urban affairs or community development. This blend of faculty allows the division to bring together two worlds -- that of the university where scholarly activities, research and curriculum development can proceed, and the daily world of our cities, suburbs and rural fringe areas where the dynamics of community development are happening at their own pace, and whether we like it or not.

When I was brought in to implement the urban communications sequence in the division, the idea was only an item in the organization chart. We knew that courses should be developed at the undergraduate and graduate levels, that they should relate to innovative field work, community service and scholarly review of the efforts, but that was about it.

My most recent experiences as a journalist specializing in urban affairs, and my urban studies at Harvard and M.I.T. as a Nieman fellow, had already convinced me of the interdisciplinary systems approach of the division. It was clear to me that we could not hope to understand the dynamics of our urban society, plan for the present needs and future possibilities, or evolve new and better communities, if there was no multidisciplinary approach. This same attitude carried over to the urban communications sequence. Let me describe it.

THE URBAN COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM.

The allure of communications study is its ability to move through a number of different fields. There is an information component in every one of the above systems I have just mentioned, for instance, and a particular means of communicating that information most effectively. But this ability of communications to have some relevance to many things is also its danger. There is the danger of wandering in such a haphazard pattern through the communications field that little substantive work results.

It was my contention from the very beginning that the "urban communications" designation was valid -- that there are particular situations involving the transfer of information that are unique to our urban setting, and that the means of communications must be as varied and as custom-designed as the need. We have seen this come to pass somewhat in print journalism with the emergence in the late 1960's of specialists in urban affairs coverage. It was about the same time that national studies pointed up the inadequacy of much urban coverage in print and broadcast journalism, and reporters and editors were urged to develop more background, skills and care in reporting the crucial issues in this field.

The need for a specialized program in urban communications is even more crucial when we take it into areas beyond mass communications practices. For instance, I was concerned with the tendency of planners and community developers to devote millions of dollars and years of time to regional transportation and land use studies, and then fail to win the support of politicians and the understanding of the general public because they could not communicate their basic findings. There is also a serious inability on the part of many designers -- whether we talk of an architect designing a low-income housing unit, or a planner redeveloping an entire heart of a city -- to gather adequate information from the potential users, and institute an effective and equitable feedback process before the design is frozen into final budget allocations and implementation.

In the delivery of social services, we find the inability to effectively administrate a program closely linked to (1) the opportunity of the users to know and understand the program, (2) the quality of feedback between the users and the staff of the program, and (3) the sense of the program shown by the general public and the politicians who react to public opinion. The latter can mean the life or death of a crucially important community service or development program.

The emerging field of health services is another where the information component is critical. What is the basic stock of information every citizen needs to maintain proper health? What happens when the clientele for the health services is hampered by a language problem as in the case of millions of Spanish-speaking Americans who must deal with an Anglo-oriented system? What happens to migrant farm families such as the ones we studied in New Jersey who cannot get basic information on food stamps, health care or school services because they have no telephones and the throwaway weekly paper is never, but never, thrown on the steps of their tenant shahks? Why are young people in Newark's inner city turned off by the canned materials shipped in from Washington on drug abuse? How do you structure adequate information programs using small and large scale information packages in a variety of media to deal with such issues as venereal disease, day care, mental health or alcoholism?

The educational system in our urban areas provides a marvelous possibility for new forms of communications, if only the senders (teachers) and the receivers (students) were not so often at odds, and in such hostile positions. We are examining the classroom and the school itself as a critical node in alternate media structure, we are designing for urban communities. In the classroom we want to take audiovisual from the realm of overhead projectors stored unused in the closets, and assist students and teachers in communicative techniques using the most current potential of videotaping units, CATV transmission and closed circuitry where it is available, or in the absence of hardware, to develop a 'bamboo stick' approach of low-budget development of curricula materials. We are also sending out our students to local high schools and letting them work side by side with teachers to develop courses in communications and mass media at the high school level. Our program will work closely with another department of the college -- Urban Teacher Education -- to develop communications resources that particularly meet the needs of central city and inner city areas.

Government offers a particularly fruitful area for development. Urban communications and the pace of community development go hand in hand. Anyone who has closely watched the activities of local and state governments knows the archaic nature of their ability to communicate. Their dependence upon the news conference and a barrage of press releases has not gotten the story across. The ability of government officials to transmit information about their programs, services and problems in a way that effectively reaches the majority of citizens in the city or region is pathetically inadequate.

We are linking our communications interns with students in political science. The study of government and politics given hand in hand with the study of information needs and the delivery systems related to them will be increasingly more important. We are also exploring joint programs with a major labor union, and see the network of local, regional and national union contacts as a valuable collection of information nodes that are not being used.

In environmental and ecological concerns, the need for adequate information is obvious. The ability to translate complicated and subtle concerns into an information package that the general public can grasp is not an easy one. How do we create materials that do, in fact, show potential imbalance in the ecology, or relate the impact of a new freeway to the total living and design problems of a major city through which the freeway will pass.

In the fine arts, growing numbers of students wish to link their interest in graphics, photography, film, painting or videotaping to the critical needs of our urban society. This blend of fine arts and communications to make the message more palatable, its impact more effective and more socially relevant is another fruitful area of exploration.

I am particularly interested in communications planning as a discipline that is equal in importance to transportation or land use planning. Graduate students in the department are working in a variety of individual projects related to social planning, and we must move more extensively into integrated regional planning that looks upon communications as a resource requiring more thought, budget and policymaking. Where will the multimedia information centers of the future be placed? What is the relationship of information centers to educational facilities? What is the best placement for studios and transmission facilities in urban, suburban and rural areas in transition? How can travel patterns be altered by a more sophisticated reworking of communications resources?

In the area of race relations, civil and human rights, things so close to the heart of our urban condition as a nation, the role of communications is essential. Whether we are talking about information about equal employment opportunity, or designing an information retrieval system to gather complaints in the thousands of cases we know exist, there is a need for trained communications specialists.

In mass communications, both in print and broadcast, our work and attention is extensive. How do you best analyze the outpouring from local dailies, weeklies and magazines, or radio and television as they relate to the most pressing urban issues? What can be done to sensitize professionals in the mass media, and students who will go into the media, to the particular information needs of an urban society? It is possible to train students to become urban affairs specialists in the mass media, and to work with midcareer people and retrain them if they are willing.

I am mentioning only a few of the many areas we are gradually bringing into our realm of concern in urban communications. It is an example of the unwillingness to define a narrow field of interest, at the same time we were bringing a sharper focus to the topic.

We also began with several other notions. The program must not be wedded to any particular medium. Students must be trained to understand that information is disseminated in a wide variety of formal and informal channels of communication, and a greater variety of formats. Thus the traditional mass media receive close attention, but so do informal channels of communications. Wall posters, skywriting, phamplets, brochures, street theater, folk music, exhibitions -- choose the communicative format to meet the need. Develop the skills to communicate within the environment of a multidisciplinary study of urban life and community development, and you have a much more valuable end product.

Let me describe several positions that angle our urban communications on its own unique flight pattern:

A Philosophy of Communications

It is most important to ask the question, why bother with an urban communications program? And to ask the question of what communications does to us as well as for us? We are all tired of hearing the endless dirge sung about urban society in the United States. We all know it is in deep trouble and may eventually present an unlivable, inhuman situation if we do not do something about it. For these reasons, our concern with communications in the urban field urges value judgments and ethical consideration upon the student and ourselves. It is not enough that a practitioner of urban communications be professionally competent.

He or she must ask what are the effects of urban communications when substantial segments of society are left out of the process, or when the information given to them is incomplete or distorted. How democratic are our decisions if they are based on a faulty communication structure that hampers the electorate in getting sufficient information, or the elected in hearing the views and desires of those they are chosen to represent? We must continually hammer away at the importance of good information being effectively communicated, and show the results that can accrue in the way of bad community development, imprecise legislation or dangerously faulty decisions by private and government officials who base their actions on a mulfunctioning urban communications network.

What is Urban?

In my program, urban is defined in the megalopolitan or regional sense. We are an urban society and our concern with urban communications overlaps the interests of community development as it relates to the central cities, the suburbs and transitional rural areas on the fringe of the metropolis that will be tomorrow's cities. Certainly, each sector requires its own differetiation and finer calibration, especially in an American society which has chosen to mark off its class and racial lines in inner and outer circles of our metropolis. But at the same time, the interrelatedness of the urban communications system must be defined, analyzed and programs developed to meet this condition.

Our concern with urban communications also moves us into state and national levels when actions there have an effect on the urban well-being of the central city, suburban or rural fringe areas. Thus the Moynihan report and the information problems surrounding the memorandum, and the ultimate effect this had at the local anti-poverty level, are matters of concern to us although the action centered at the White House. So too, the national pattern of

information gathering and dissemination by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, or the directives of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs becomes an important element in an urban communications review, just as the information delivery system of a community development agency or the mayor's office, or the role of rumor in civil disturbances, are areas of concern.

Urban Communications and Activism

The urban communications program is imbued with a sense of activism and social concern which is reflected in both the Department of Community Development where it is based, in the Division of Urban Studies, and in the college itself.

If information, and the means of dissemination, are power, those without these elements are powerless. While we avoid blanket indictments and easy generalizations of present mass media and communications forms, we do question their efficacy, and when necessary take the role of gadfly. It is my strongly held position that communications(in its study and application), represents an active phenomenon. Urban communications is not merely the conduit for other institutions in society to send their messages back and forth. We all know that urban society is sharply affected, shaped and reshaped by the urban communications system which must be treated as an institution in its own right. While it will take much more time to research and define the results, in unison with field work and application of the concepts, communications as a positive tool of social change is an important part of the program.

For instance, students of mine who are preparing a multimedia documentary of a welare mother who has been the victim of a careless bureaucracy that allowed her to rent substandard housing has catalyzed a whole review of the woman's case. Legal services, federal housing officials and the community development personnel who before did not give a damn, are suddenly taking a more active interest in the woman's case, and taking corrective action. This is even before the materials are publicized. The simple presence of a videotape unit or reel recorder has its own peculiar power, and we are just beginning to explore the potential, when placed directly in the hands of layman and amateurs.

Our communications program of concerned with the injustices of a present network of communications which puts the means of communications in the hands of some, but not all of the nation's people, while we still cling to the notion of a marketplace of ideas in our democracy. We take the latter quite seriously and have set out to find more precisely who has the means of communications in local communities, which groups do not, and why, and how the imbalance can be redressed. Here we find a great variety of deprived groups -- not only, but most certainly minorities. The young, women, the working class, a large portion of white ethnic and middle class American, are also victims of a communications system which excludes them or presents their image in a distorted form, or underinforms, misinterprets, misinforms them, at the same time it usually discourages direct involvement by these people in the communicative process.

While we are realistic enough to recognize the presence and power of existing communications structure in our urban framework, and even to acknowledge that much of what is done is good, and some of it is very good, the urban communications program also stresses the importance of a search for alternate urban communications structures. These alternate structures are examined within the needs of a rapidly changing urban society which finds many of its information needs not served by existing channels, and many new information needs emerging which the existing communications system, whether we talk of mass or mini-scale, were never intended to meet.

The search for alternate communications formats and the improvement or redesign of existing ones is bound up in another programmatic goal -- the development of critical consumers of information. I feel that the inefficiencies of our communications system can best be corrected through the pressure and force of enough people who realize what is being done to them by such ineffective communications acts. It is further held that the training to do this must begin at the elemetary school level, find more direct application in the high schools through the evolvement of youth media channels, and finally in the colleges and universities be brought to a level of refinement in undergraduate and graduate programs.

Our program in urban communications welcomes three categories of student:

* The one who plans a career in communications either as a practitioner of communications, a teacher of communications or a critic of it.

* The one who plans a career in community development related field but who also wishes to develop the communications skills that will make

him a dual skilled planner-communicator, architect-communicator, teacher-communicator, health official-communicator, etc.

* The one who has no particular desire to pursue either a primary or secondary career in communications but who has an intellectual curiousity about the urban communications field and wishes to include study of it as part of the liberal arts pursuit, or to relate the study to his or her main field of discipline.

It is a strongly held principle of the program that the serious student of urban communications must be given the theoretical and conceptual tools, but also must have the basic communicative skills to apply what has been theorized within the framework of field work, research and the production of communications materials. The environment for analysis and true learning can best take place in combination -- in the classroom and on campus where mistakes can safely be made, without the pressure of embarrassment or loss of employment, and also in the world beyond the campus where urban communications skills will ultimately be applied by the student turned graduate.

In studying communications by doing, I believe there are a whole range of related benefits that accrue. In process, the student senses the limitations and difficulties any communicator must face when he is up against the limitations of time, resources or simple human inability to gather all the facts, assess them and transform them into an effectively communicated message. The student also learns beyond the circle of the communicative process. Thus, the community development student who analyzes the field of local low income housing in order to translate this into a finished videotape or written report, not only learns the possibilities and limitations of the medium, but also -- if the job is done competently -- comes away with much greater knowledge of zoning, design, recreational and open space use, financing, political power, governmental decisionmaking, human need, and human greed.

The multidisciplinary approach to urban communications is underlined. Just as the study of urban society is approached from a variety of systems that function within that society, the means of communications and their effect, are also interdisciplinary in nature. Thus when we look at central city, we must analyze how various institutions -- government, the schools, the family, the mass media, fraternal groups, law enforcement, health institutions, religious institutions, planning and development agencies, and the like -- affect the attitudes, images symbols and store of information which feed the communications system. At the same time, we must look at the various means of communicating and here exploration can take place in the area of newspapers, television, radio, magazines, books, wall posters, film, recording, videotapes, graphics, skywriting, graffitti, literally, any way that information is conveyed on the mass or mini-communications scale. Both formal and informal information channels are reviewed. A memorandum from a mayor's desk or a network report on the decay of the cities, can thus both have significance in our scheme of things. Through such general exploration, the dimensions of the urban communications field are set out, and within these wide expanses the student of urban communications can then find his particular area of concentration.

Throughout all this, the question of what communications do <u>to us</u> as well as <u>for us</u> is then stressed. The exercise requires far more analysis, far more of a search for improvement and alternatives, and ultimately direct involvement on the part of the student then passive "Mass Media and Society" kinds of courses which too often leave the student with heightened frustrations, and a reinforcement of the distrust and sense of helplessness in the fact of information which he brought to the course in the first place.

COURSE OFFERINGS, FIELD WORK AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Just as the study of communications offers a tremendous opportunity to span a variety of disciplines, the vastness of the terrain provides too many chances for the student and teacher to become lost in the woods. It becomes a problem of not being able to see the trees because of the number of forests in which to explore. We have not solved this dilemma by any means but we have begun to score some successes.

The specialization in the area of urban communications is one, though still gross way of narrowing down the field of exploration. We can thus set our sights on case studies, institutions and phenomena that relate to urban society within our previous definition of it as the central cities, suburbs and transitional fringe areas on the edge of the metropolis. In this way, it is possible to establish opportunities for sensitizing the student to the particular ambience, needs and dynamics of an urban society, within the American urban framework, and link this to the study of communications.

Beginning in the Fall of 1972, the urban communications program will offer the student in the Department of Community Development the opportunity to receive a major in the department, with a concentration in urban communications. Approximately four fulltime faculty and several parttime faculty will relate to the urban communications offerings.

In 1969, when I began the urban communications program and was then sole faculty member the emphasis was on broader introductory courses and specialized seminars with a minimum of hands-on workshops using communications hardware. Today, the sequence offers a series of introductory, middle level and advanced courses in the theoretical exploration of urban communications and a rapidly growing program in workshop skills related to several community service and research projects.

For a college or university that wishes to explore the first possibilities of urban communications program, without becoming over-committed in the way of faculty, equipment or course offerings this approach is a logical one. In a time of continued budget constraints, the avenue is even more attractive. (See Appendix for catalogue description of courses.)

The first courses I developed were:

Communications, Mass Media and Urban Life -- A broad overview of the field. It allowed a simultaneous exploration of urban life in relationship to information systems, both formal and informal.

Seminar in Communications, Mass Media and Urban Policy -- This allowed advanced students to explore specific case studies, left more room for individual field research and a major paper. This seminar had enough flexibility to allow students to do a series of independent but related studies, or in subsequent semesters to act as a combined research team. Most recently, the seminar concentrated on a suburban community, Plainfield, New Jersey, with a significant Black population and analyzed information needs in such areas as housing, education, youth development, culture and the arts, government and community development as they might be served by a CATV (Community antenna television) system or public broadcasting which is beginning in New Jersey.

Writing Skills for the Urban Studies Major -- In a college without formal requirements in English Literature and Composition, an opportunity for our departmental majors to develop research and writing skills was the initial reason for this course. Study was on an independent, tutorial basis.

The gradual introduction of urban communications courses allowed time for contacts with interested parties in government, community groups and the mass media. It also gave students the chance to explore the field witnout being expected to make immediate, major commitments.

The next course at the introductory level was Television, Radio, Film and Urban Society which allowed for a more focused look at these important media as they related to urban communications. The course has become a natural second semester companion course to the Communications, Mass Media and Urban Life.

Throughout 1970 and 1971, the course development allowed time for the college to bring in more students,and for these students to begin finding their concentrations of interests.

From the outset, students in all the courses were encouraged to do a major paper that represented the fruits of independent reading and field research. Marshall McLuhan has said Plato sought the ideal university without realizing it was right there in the streets of Athens. This is an over-simplification and any faculty member who has struggled with the inherent difficulties of breaking beyond the classroom to link daily societal needs with academic study knows the problems. Many of the students come to us conditioned by high school experiences which discourage independent study in the field. The simple difficulty of making contacts, getting back and forth from the campus to the field, and finding the time to do independent field work, and still carry a full complement of campus-tied courses do not make it easy for either the student or the faculty member.

This was partly solved by bringing to the classroom a number of guest lecturers related to the urban communications field who also were involved in communications projects to which a student could relate in a satellite way. The students themselves began mini-field work projects in the courses that allowed them to try their wings without flying too high too soon. In many cases, students who probed the beginnings of an idea in an introductory course have now carried through with advanced work and have found career-related goals in their studies.

For example, one student who began in the introductory courses with modest field research in day care and early childhood development as they relate to communications gradually branched out. In the advanced seminar she turned her interests into a major research paper related to CATV, and then moved into the area of community housing needs.

It became clear that students required a course format beyond the introductory level not as defined or limiting as the advanced seminar, and a workshop structure, Mass Media and Communications in the Metropolis allowed students to pursue more independent study. This same girl continued with her work, with readings, observation and field contact becoming even more precise. Now, whe was assigned to a day care center and was spending time analyzing the operations of the center and childhood development as they related to specific com-unications skills and the use of audiovisual materials. She has since moved into communicative skills courses and is working in the field.

An important added level for student initiative was focused on independent studies within the "Special Topics" categories in the 200 and 400 levels. As interest in the urban communications field grew additional students in the courses were handled with the assistance of a half-time instructor and assignment of a graduate student as teaching assistant.

The student work and classroom activity opened a rich variety of information research. A few examples: study of the bi-linqual needs of the Puerto Rican community in New Jersey accompanied by a household survey of approximately 100 families with the assistance of the Model Cities program, and content analysis of major newspapers serving communities with significant Puerto Rican populations; analysis of community development and healthprograms in specific cities as these related to communications; study of a community-owned radio station and the impact its sale would have on the Black community which depended on it.

Other students did analysis of mass media in New Jersey in such areas as the environment and ecological concerns; the media handling of racial and women's rights issues; the operation of a Black-oriented weekly newspaper in a suburban community; the needs and interests of young people at a local high school as they related to existing mass media and development of their own media outlets.

Another student initiated a participant-observer independent study and worked closely with five families in a migrant farm area, assessing their information needs and how these were served by existing formal and informal information channels.

Other students developed relationships with communications and audiovisual programs in local high schools and did an assessment of the educational needs of information as they relate to audiovisual development.

In many cases, the students were moving from a first exploratory interest in the field to more defined commitments. The amount of time they were willing to give to a project was proportionate, and then much more so, to their interests.

With the addition of a second full-time faculty member it was possible in 1971 to develop a new series of course offerings. These include Mass Media and Government in America and Mass Media, Communications and Elections which is offered in even-numbered years when significant elections allow research and field work in relationship to on-going election campaigns.

In 1972, with the help of additional faculty, new courses will be added in such areas as Television Production using the broadcast-quality videotape facilities of the university's television center and a Community Videotape Workshop which concentrates on the use of simple, portable, half-inch videotape equipment as they relate to community development needs.

At the graduate level, a seminar in Communications Planning will develop the discipline of planning resources for a region as they relate to its communications needs, and the actual production of audiovisual materials and the use of mass media to assist planners and policy developers in master planning, acquiring more meaningful feedback on development issues, and implementing development plans. In many cases, the graduate students relate their work to field projects also being undertaken by upper level undergraduate students.

Very quickly, students began to see the interrelationships between various disciplines and urban communications. As a result students who were education majors or going into health, housing or transportation began linking up their studies in several courses, and with the help of faculty, allowed to do an expanded field project. Recently, political student interns combined their work in the field with communications analysis. There has been particularly strong interest on the part of students in the fine arts field studying sound, graphics, photography, object collection and design who have moved their studies closer to the practical and applied applications of urban oriented communications courses.

As the urban communications program became known the requests from various community officials and groups grew with it. In order to more closely link such community service contact with the curriculum, allow for both service, reserach and a useful field experience for the student, The Urban Communications Teaching and Research Center was established. In June, we will move into a three-unit studio centered around the use of half-inch videotape equipment, and plans call for construction of a more expanded, multimedia studio on campus by 1974 for the permanent home of the center, and the focal point for much of the future teaching and research in the urban communications program.

When a number of Black and Puerto Rican groups from Newark area complained of the poor coverage they received from mass media, a program was established in cooperation with the Journalism School to train ten minority mid-career persons in newspaper and radio reporting. All have been trained and hired by media or related media programs.

In co-directing this program, it become clear to me that the long range problem of sensitizing the white-dominated mass media to the needs of minority groups, and bringing more minority reporters and editors into the field would not be solved with one-shot training programs, but a decided push to get more Blacks and Puerto Ricans(the predominant minority groups in New Jersey) interested in mass communications careers by gradual and then more intensive involvement in our urban communications program. Thus, we can see in the space of a year or so, a significant number of minority students graduating with specific communications skills (both practical and theoretical) who will be ideal college graduates for the mass media to hire.

If research at the university and community service levels are not looked upon as added activities to the classroom but an integral part of the education process -- and one that ought to be at the undergraduate level as well as the graduate level -- thenthe rationale for a truly viable and lively urban communications program makes more sense.

In the advanced seminar mentioned earlier in which the city of Plainfield's information needs as they relate to CATV and community development were analyzed, the culmination was a final presentation with a wide range of media people and community official including the mayor, councilmen and various community agencies which we videotaped at our television studios. The discussion was a deeply involved and moving one for me, and my sense of the importance of a university-related communications program involving the community hit home even more forcefully.

The ideas that were taking shape then have formulated into an experimental program which is now in effect between Livingston and Community Action Plainfield (CAP) Inc., the offical OEO antipoverty unit in the nearly community. It was funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity and I am directing the $100,000 18-month project while continuing my teaching and research duties at the university.

Since September, our undergraduate and graduate students, along with Plainfield high school students and official from the CAP agency have been in training at the college. Workshops have explored the use of videotaping (portable); television in-studio production; still photography; radio production; print and graphics, and program development. The teams are presently assembling a multimedia package on the community's housing needs,for instance.

We recently opened a communications center in Plainfield at the CAP agency which will function as production center for broadcast and non-broadcast videotapes; radio offerings; photographic and print media offerings. The CAP staff and high school students gain retroactive college credit if they complete the program. Our students are gaining direct and total experience in urban communications as they relate to community development needs.

In the Fall of 1972, we hope to begin teaching courses in the high school, and bringing students more directly into the communications development of the anti-poverty program.

If the program is successful, we hope to expand the services to other communities who have asked for similar assistance. Our students will begin taking on field internships as they develop the communications skills themselves. In each case, the practical communicative skills are combined with the theoretical and conceptual development embodied in our college offerings.

Another program underway in relationship to the courses is an Environmental Documentation project funded by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Students from my mass communications workshop and Professor Daniel Newman's Place Analysis Course (Art Department) are using multimedia techniques to document urban, suburban and rural environments in New Jersey. These are the historic fall district of Paterson; the inner city of New Brunswick as it relates to a Puerto Rican population; the Atlantic Shore development; Trenton and a housing project; the transition of rural Hunterdon County from farm to urban, and development of the Hackensack Meadows, said to be the richest piece of real estate in the world.

The goal is to develop low cost documentation techniques in videotaping, photography, sound, object collection, exhibition and place analysis, and then work with a whole range of school, museum, library, historical preservation and environmental groups in linking the communications and documentation skills with action to preserve what is good in the urban, suburban and rural environments and prevent the repetition of mistakes in community development.

Less than three years later, much has been accomplished but we are still at the beginnings. The creation of a major urban communications program at a major state university is an exciting, and frustrating experience. Within the constraints of increasingly tight budget, even more initiative must focus on low budget methods of developing such programs. We have used the facilities of corporations and outside media outlets, shared our own resources with other groups, and engaged in a form of guerrilla warfare in the groves of academe where bamboo sticks have to do when the more sophisticated resources and backup were unavailable in developing the communications program.

We are also literally at the beginnings of developing an integrated communications program at the college-wide level which links the various interest of about ten other departments in concentration of communications study in addition to a departmental major. We will work closely with the former School of Journalism at Rutgers which is being reorganized into an exciting School of Human Communications in which the urban communications program will play an important part, and in which we in turn will send our students for urgently needed work in the field of human communications study. We have, and are, developing relationships with a whole list of other units in the university.

Our own departmental majors will soon begin undertaking one and two semester field internships in addition to the cluster of five communications courses they must take within the department and other urban studies courses and senior seminars. It will mean a great deal of additional work to find and supervise meaningful internships for them but the department has already begun planning for faculty specailizing in intern supervision.

Our students are already becoming known around the state. They were by my side when I testified before state legislative commissions reviewing CATV legislation. They were out in Indiana recently with Plainfield officials videotaping the Black political convention caucus. They are working for the mass media. Others are helping develop programs in the local schools. Some are assisting local communities to establish environmental documentation projects, and in one case, establish a children's museum of the environment. Other are advising Model Cities agencies on means of communicating with Spanish-speaking constituencies.

It is only a partial answer. But it is an answer to the skeptical question someone asked me a few years ago: "Just what is the difference between communications and urban communications?"

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## URBAN COMMUNICATIONS CONCENTRATION

Department advisers: Aumente and Sachsman

The urban communications sequence combines theoretical, analytical and practical skills with urban studies and community development systems. The goal: an innovative, more effective and equitable flow of information in urban society, and distribution of the means of communication to a greater segment of society. The framework has local, state, regional and national dimensions. The central cities, suburbs and rural fringe areas of our metropolitan centers provide the field resource for study, research and community service. Traditional mass communications in all media forms, mini-communications systems, new alternate media and information systems, and emphasis on innovation and multidisciplinary work characterize the urban communications offerings.

Students may: (1) pursue work leading toward communications careers; (2) apply their communications knowledge and skills to related career objectives; or (3) include their work in a composite of a well-rounded liberal arts experience. Faculty advisers in the urban communications sequence will assist students in developing any of the three approaches, and have additional information available. Students are also encouraged to develop combined study programs between urban communications and the School of Human Communications (formerly the Journalism School at Rutgers). Courses in both areas will increasingly be inter-related.

Those who wish to develop a communications concentration within the department major should plan on taking five courses in the sequence besides the department's general requirements for all majors. Two courses should be at the introductory 200-level, and the three others should be a combination of theoretical and skills courses drawn from the communications concentration. Students will also be able to fashion a communications internship of one semester away from the campus. The introductory courses will increasingly become a prerequisite for more advanced courses, workshops, seminars, independent study and internships, and students are strongly advised to include them in their freshman and sophomore years.

## THE URBAN COMMUNICATIONS TEACHING AND RESEARCH CENTER

Director: Jerome L. Aumente

The center will be housed in new studio facilities and offices within the Division of Urban Studies and Community Development, and has both college and university-wide relationships. It encourages a wholly innovative approach to communications systems in urban society, consolidating course offerings, independent study, internships, community service and research on the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The center has completed a special media and minorities training project. With a variety of public and private funds it is engaged in various projects including: the creation of alternate communication centers in New Jersey communities; development of environmental documentation techniques; the teaching of communications at the high school level; and extensive research and community service in community antenna or cable television (CATV); public broadcasting and traditional mass communications outlets as they relate to urban communications needs in our metropolitan centers.

The center is an integral part of the Livingston college-wide communications program now in formation, and has close ties with various departments and branches of the university, and outside public and private groups. Its major interests include: communications as they relate to minority concerns; Spanish bilingual information systems; media monitoring and criticism; alternate media forms; educational media development in the schools, adult education and external degree programs; mid-career training for journalists and media specialists from the public and private sector; CATV, public and commercial broadcasting; and information systems relating to community development, planning, transportation, the schools, health, housing, government, legislative and regulatory agencies, the environment, interpersonal and intergroup relations in urban society.

The following two courses are an essential introduction to the field for students at all levels, but especially for underclassmen who plan to do more advanced work or major in the field:

MASS MEDIA, COMMUNICATIONS AND URBAN LIFE (Cr. 4, 4) Fall, Spring 02:975:271, 272

Sachsman

A study of traditional mass media: newspapers; magazines; books; advertising; television; radio and film—as well as alternate media: the underground press; community-controlled media; and innovative message-sending, through drama, music and the visual arts. Urban communications in various forms from interpersonal contact to master plans, citizen boards or special presidential study commissions will be analyzed. Objectives: solid grounding in urban communications and mass media; the development of critical instincts in the formation consumer; and analysis of the impact of information on urban society in terms of social, political, governmental, cultural, economic, educational and environmental concerns. Lectures, special presentations and guests. (Freshmen may take this course.)

WRITING SKILLS FOR THE URBAN STUDIES MAJOR (Cr. 4, 4) Fall, Spring 02:975:273, 274

Aumente and Sachsman

Prerequisite: permission of the instructors.

An intensive workshop, either in tutorial or small seminar arrangement, for majors who wish to improve basic writing skills in order to communicate better in their chosen field. Students must submit samples of their present writing, and be prepared to undertake extensive writing assignments.

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TELEVISION, RADIO AND FILM IN URBAN SOCIETY (Cr. 4)
Aumente Spring 02:975:276

Examination of television, radio and film as they relate to urban society on key urban issues; social relations; civil and human rights; race relations; education; the environment; community and metropolitan development; politics; government; citizen participation; and cultural interests. Faculty is drawn from several disciplines. Lectures, workshops, film screenings, and film study will examine the history, development, production techniques, and the social, cultural and political power of audio-visual media. Issues such as political image-making, community control of media, alternate media, cable TV, public broadcasting, media monitoring, criticism and FCC license challenges as they relate to urban society will be reviewed. (Freshmen may take this course.)

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The following courses are for students who wish to engage in more specialized study in the communications field:

MASS MEDIA AND GOVERNMENT IN AMERICA (Cr. 4)
Sachsman Spring 02:975:278

An examination of the relationship between the mass media and government with emphasis on the role of the press as a critic of the government, and on government control of the media. This course examines the roles played by the press in shaping executive, legislative, and judicial decisions on the local, state, and national levels, and examines the roles played by government in controlling the actions of the mass media. The course deals specifically with contemporary problems and places emphasis on the effects of the press-government relationship on the general public and particularly on urban society. (Offered in alternate years, the spring before national elections. Leads into Mass Media, Communications and Elections. Freshmen may take this course.)

MASS COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOP IN THE METROPOLIS (Cr. 4, 4) Fall, Spring 02:975:370, 371
Aumente

Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.

Students working individually or in teams will undertake research and community action field work in urban communications and mass media (print, broadcast, film, the fine arts, radio, etc.) in the central city, suburbs, or metropolitan area. Students will be encouraged to develop projects in consultation with the faculty. They will meet periodically to discuss and share their experiences. Opportunities for field work include: public and educational broadcasting; cable TV; ethnic broadcast needs of community groups such as Model Cities; suburban action groups concerned with the environment, fair housing, drugs, etc.; health education, youth, ethnic and working class needs. Students may link projects with related studies or other courses.

MASS MEDIA, COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTIONS (Cr. 4)
Sachsman Fall 02:975:379

An examination of the role of the mass media in the American electoral process and the power of interpersonal and mass communications to affect voting behavior. The course deals specifically with such topics as: communications and attitude change; political news coverage; political advertising; and mass media election and post-election coverage. Direct attention is given to the ongoing election campaigns, and student research and/or field work is oriented towards the role of the media in the ongoing election campaigns. (Offered in alternate even-numbered, national election years.)

SEMINAR IN COMMUNICATIONS, MASS MEDIA AND URBAN POLICY (Cr. 4, 4) Fall, Spring 02:975:471, 472
Sachsman

A seminar which analyzes the impact of communications and mass media on urban policy. Working individually and as a research team, the seminar members will undertake field work, readings and conferences with guests to explore selected urban issues in such areas as: race relations, politics, government, community development, cultural, educational and environmental issues. Objective: improve present urban communications and create new, more relevant approaches whether the item is a commission, study, memo or the offerings of a television network.

SPECIAL TOPICS IN URBAN STUDIES
Staff Fall, Spring 02:975:393, 559
Fall, Spring 02:975:493, 499

Prerequisite: permission of the advisor.

Section 07 is reserved for communications work.

TELEVISION PRODUCTION (Cr. 4, 4)
Durand and Aumente Fall, Spring 02:975:375, 376

Prerequisite: permission of the instructors.

Designed primarily for communications majors and others who will use communications skills in their careers. A television production workshop using the facilities of the Instructional Television Studios. The course will emphasize hands-on skills in all phases of television production, direction, program development and use of television production facilities. The workshop will include production of a specific program within the urban communications field.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION
Aumente and Newman

Prerequisite: permission of the instructors.

A project to develop techniques of documenting urban, suburban and rural environments, and to link the documentation to community action. Video-taping, photography, sound recording, object collection, place analysis and exhibition techniques will be studied. Students must be prepared to devote one full day in class and to undertake extensive field work. They will register for two courses: Mass Communications Workshop in the Metropolis (02:975:371, 372) and Place (02:080:116). (Two-semester sequence: Fall, Spring.)

VIDEO COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOP (Cr. 4, 4)
Aumente and Staff Fall, Spring 02:975:373, 374

Prerequisite: permission of the instructors.

A workshop for communications majors and others who will apply communications skills to related careers in the urban field. The workshop will examine in-studio production techniques, program development, research and production. There will be attention paid to video-taping techniques using portable equipment and in-studio equipment, especially as they apply to information needs in the urban metropolis. Students will participate in joint production projects with CATV (community antenna television) public and commercial broadcasting as potential outlets. Alternate communications centers will also be examined in the community.